



IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). A picture encoding method comprising:  
receiving an input video signal,  
encoding the video signal using a reference picture signal in a frame memory to  
generate a video code stream;  
storing in the frame memory as the reference picture a local decoded picture signal  
generated in encoding the video signal;  
encoding the reference picture signal read out from the frame memory to generate a  
reference picture code stream, and  
multiplexing the video code stream with the reference picture code stream to generate  
an output code stream.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Currently Amended). ~~A picture encoding~~ The method according to claim 1,  
wherein encoding the video signal encodes the video signal in units of a macroblock,  
encoding the reference picture signal encodes the reference picture signal in units of a  
macroblock, and the multiplexing ~~multiplexes~~ multiplexes the video code stream with the  
reference picture code stream in units of a macroblock.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended). A picture encoding apparatus comprising:  
a receiving unit configured to receive an input video signal,  
a first encoding unit configured to encode the video signal by using a reference  
picture signal to generate a video code stream,  
a frame memory configured to store a local decoded picture signal generated in  
encoding the video signal as the reference picture signal;

a second encoding unit configured to encode the reference picture signal to generate a reference picture code stream, and

a multiplexing unit configured to multiplex the video code stream and the reference picture code stream read out from the frame memory to generate an output code stream.

Claims 6-9 (Canceled).

Claim 10 (Currently Amended). ~~A picture encoding method~~ The apparatus according to claim 5, wherein the first encoding unit encodes the video signal in units of a macroblock, the second encoding unit encodes the reference picture signal in units of a macroblock, and the multiplexing unit ~~multiplexes~~ multiplexes the video code stream with the reference picture code stream in units of a macroblock.

Claims 11-21 (Canceled).

Claim 22 (New): A computer readable medium storing a program which when executed by a computer results in performance of steps comprising:

- (a) receiving an input video signal;
- (b) encoding the video signal using a reference picture signal to generate a video code stream;
- (c) encoding the reference picture signal to generate a reference picture code stream;
- (d) storing in a frame memory a local decoded picture signal generated in encoding the video signal;
- (e) encoding the reference picture signal read out from the frame memory; and
- (f) multiplexing the video code stream with the reference picture code stream to generate an output code stream.

Claim 23 (New): The medium according to claim 22, wherein:

step (b) comprises encoding the video signal in units of a macroblock,  
step (e) comprises encoding the reference picture signal in units of a macroblock, and  
step (f) comprises multiplexing the video code stream with the reference picture code stream in units of a macroblock.